



Emergency Response

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides immediate and effective response and assistance during emergencies and disasters. Although these responsibilities lay primarily with state and local offices, in special circumstances, the Corps may supplement those efforts to save human life, prevent immediate human suffering or mitigate property damage.

The preparedness program includes an emergency management organization, planning, training, maintaining adequate supplies, tools and equipment, and an inspection program for non-Federal flood control structures.



The Emergency Management (EM) branch for the Northwestern Division (NWD) is engaged in planning, training, and response activities for natural disasters, national emergencies, and civil support. Employees throughout NWD respond to disasters such as hurricanes, winter storms, floods, earthquakes and other emergency situations occurring not only within their own geographic boundaries, but nationwide and around the world, as well.

In the past five years, Northwestern Division has spent more than \$50 million during response and recovery activities for 16 major responses involving the deployment of more than 1,800 division and district personnel.

Specifically, the Division's EM organizations execute USACE authorities for the following:

- Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies, including inspection of federal levees and qualifying non-federal levees and flood-fighting authorities
- National Emergency Preparedness Program, including Continuity of Operations Planning for NWD.

The Corps offers flood-fighting measures for any flood control structures or other areas that provide public service, regardless of whether it is federal, public or private. Types of assistance include the following:

- Assistance in search and rescue operations
- Technical advice and assistance
- Emergency repairs to levees and other flood control projects
- Materials such as sandbags, polyethylene sheeting, lumber, pumps, or rock for stabilization when the Corps is actively participating in a flood fight

Generally, Corps assistance ends when the emergency is over (i.e., flood waters have receded or some other predetermined stage).

The Corps' authority to perform post-flood activities immediately after a flood or coastal storm is provided by Public Law 84-99 (as amended). Corps assistance is limited to major flood or coastal storm disasters that result in life-threatening or serious property-damage situations.



This type of assistance includes the following:

- Technical advice and assistance
- Clear drainage channels, bridge openings, or structures blocked by debris deposited during the event
- Clear blockages of critical water supply intakes and sewer outfalls
- Remove debris to reopen vital transportation routes
- Temporarily restore critical public services or facilities
- Identify hazard mitigation opportunities

When there is a substantial threat to the public health and welfare of the inhabitants in the area, the Corps, within specific guidelines, is authorized to provide emergency water assistance to any community confronted with water supply problems associated with drought conditions or a contaminated source. Contamination may have resulted from deliberate, accidental or natural events, including flooding.

This type of assistance includes the following:

- Transportation of water by vehicles, small diameter pipelines, or other means for human and livestock consumption
- Well construction

In addition to its emergency authorities, the Corps also has a primary role in support of the Federal Response Plan. The plan describes the basic structures by which the federal government will mobilize resources and conduct activities to assist states in coping with the consequences of significant disasters. Within this plan, the Department of Defense has designated the Corps as the primary agency for planning, preparedness, and response under the Emergency Support Function 3 (ESF #3), Public Works, and Engineering.

Each Corps district office develops plans based on hazards unique to the area, coordinates with appropriate agencies and identifies response teams to support the assigned missions in the Federal Response Plan. Training and exercises are conducted frequently to ensure the readiness of emergency team members when the plan is activated.

The Northwestern Division Emergency Management office, located in Portland, Oregon, coordinates the activities of the Emergency Management offices for its five districts, located in Kansas City, Omaha, Seattle, Walla Walla, and Portland.

